1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

*175 Otherwise it would be difficult to avoid internal conflicts and to ward off aggression from without.[17]

He was also fully aware of the underlying weakness of Chinese rule in this distant frontier province. In the same memorial he wrote:

> It is a pity that what is called five races in one family [Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Moslems, and Tibetans] has been only nominal and has not become a reality. Chinese officials, without a sense of moral obligation but full of ideas for selfish gain, are rarely talented in administration. There are too many bad officials and too few good ones. This is why there have been more days of trouble and fewer of tranquillity. This is true of all provinces, but it is worse on the frontier. It will be impossible for the Chinese officials to control the Moslems permanently unless administration is greatly improved.[18]

*175 In keeping with the ideas expressed in his own memorial, Yang
• 231 Tseng-hsin made certain attempts to improve the economic situa-
441 tion in Sinkiang. As early as 1915 he put an end to the monopolization of the trade in silkworm eggs. In Yarkand, Khargalik, Guma Bazar, Khotan, Lob, and Keriya especially Chinese magistrates had been accustomed to import silkworm eggs from Russia and India. These they sold to the peasants, charging over three taels and sometimes as much as five taels for a case of eggs that cost one tael at most.[19]

*175 In 1916, Yang made an attempt to end the special form of
651 *corvée,* known by the Manchu term *wula,* widely prevailing in such frontier provinces as Sikang, Szechuan, Chinghai, and Sinkiang, under which officials and travelers with official authority can requisition food, lodging, and transport. The requisitioning is done through local officials, and is a source of abuse because of the extra requisitioning which the officials exact on their own be-

[17] Tseng Wen-wu, *op. cit.,* p. 599.
[18] *Ibid.,* p. 100.
[19] *Ibid.,* pp. 595–596.

Kazak

*563 The Kazakhs are
361 pastoral nomads, herding sheep, goats, horned cattle,
231 horses, and camels. Felt huts are used in the summer, but
342 most Kazakhs live in mud huts in the winter or, in mountain
221 country, in log cabins. Sheep and goats are the economic staple
[436] and serve as the units of exchange value. Poorer people live more
[262] on milk and cheese than on mutton; wealthier herd-owners eat
[291] more mutton. Sheepskins, tanned with the wool on them, are used for clothing; cotton textiles, used for lighter clothing or as a facing for the skin clothing, are acquired in trade. Felted wool is
[825] used to cover the round, conical-roofed tents. The horse, formerly important in war, is honored in Kazakh folklore for its beauty,
[276] bravery, and faithfulness. In modern times the wealthy keep herds of mares in order to be able to drink *kumis*, made by fermenting mare's milk.

*563 Like all pastoral nomads of Inner Asia, the Kazakhs have al-
361 ways had some acquaintance with agriculture. Rich men some-
463 times hire Uighurs or Chinese to cultivate grain for them on suit-
221 able land; on the other hand, poor Kazakhs, whose herds are not
241 large enough to sustain them, turn their herds over during the summer to richer clan relatives and work at cutting and storing hay or at cultivating grain or potatoes.

*563 Like other nomads, also, the Kazakhs do not wander planlessly.
221 Summer pastures belong collectively to a group of families form-
[618] ing a clan, identified by a common ancestor (real or fictitious);
361 these pastures lie within a larger territory in which jurisdiction
[592] is claimed by the larger unit, the tribe. Winter quarters more commonly belong to a single family, often the "large family" of several generations living together. The chief migrations are in spring, from winter quarters to summer pastures, and in autumn, from summer pastures back to winter quarters. The most hazardous migration is in spring, when herds are weak after the winter, when lambs are being born, and when spring blizzards may cause heavy losses.

Good winter quarters are much harder to find than good summer pastures; shelter and food must be in close combination. Hence the scarcity of suitable winter quarters rather than the amplitude of summer pastures determines the total population capacity of a nomad territory. In practice the wealthy families

Kirghiz

The original home of the Kirghiz was on the upper Yenisei River. The oldest Chinese references appear to be under the name *Chienchun,* at about the opening of the Christian era. The tribal or clan name *Burut* appears to confirm their northern origin, and an ancient connection with the ancestors of the Buryat Mongols. In 840, Kirghiz war bands defeated the Uighurs in Mongolia, causing some of the Uighurs to move south into Sinkiang. In the tenth century the Kirghiz themselves were defeated by the Khara Khitai. A part of the Kirghiz then moved back to the Yenisei River, and a part started on a gradual migration southwest toward the region which they inhabit today, where they are mentioned by a Turkish source of the sixteenth century. Like the Kazakhs, the Kirghiz were conquered by the Russians in the nineteenth century, except for those who remained within the Manchu-Chinese hegemony.

563* 131 174

The Sinkiang Kirghiz officially number 65,248. Like those across the border, they are a mountain people. They are distributed from the Tekes Valley in the Tien Shan as far east as Aksu, and along the mountains west of the Sinkiang-Soviet border down to the Pamirs and the Karakoram Mountains.

563* 161 221 361

Like the Kazakhs, the Kirghiz are pastoral nomads; but they are Alpine nomads in contrast to the Kazakhs, who are steppe nomads. While some groups of the Kazakhs spend their winters in the protection of the foothills below the main mountain ranges, and while their winter quarters are owned by individual families, the Kirghiz establish their winter quarters on the banks of rivers and the whole clan occupies common winter quarters. Their summer pastures, unlike those of the Kazakhs, are high up in the mountains. Each clan moves freely up and down between winter quarters and high summer pastures, but is limited in horizontal movement by the presence of other clans in neighboring valleys. Basically, their cattle-breeding economy is the same as that of the Kazakhs, except that they own more horned cattle including yaks which are useful pack animals for mountain travel. They are considerably poorer in total number of livestock than the Kazakhs, but have somewhat more agriculture, some of it irrigated.

[231] •

Kirghiz is a Turkic language, more closely related to Chaghatai

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[p. 133]

*563 167 174 in either agriculture or trade, those in the Ili area were established as military colonists. One garrison consisted of Solons from the upper course of the Nonni River in Northwestern Manchuria, famed for their skill in archery. The Solons were regarded by the Manchus as a valuable auxiliary tribe, but their original language, as still spoken in Manchuria, is different from Manchu, though related to it. Another garrison consisted of Sibos, from Central Manchuria, who were often employed in the province as scribes and clerks. The Sibos are also not regarded as "true" Manchus. They appear to be of captive or semislave origin, and were perhaps a tribe akin to the Manchus who resisted Manchu unification at the beginning of the seventeenth century. They had a reputation for not succumbing to Chinese influence and for retaining command of their own language and customs. Both groups were given rich lands in the Ili Valley, the Solons on the right bank of the river and the Sibos on the left bank.

*563 174 161 361 101 During the 1911 Revolution most of the city Manchus in Sinkiang were massacred, but the village communities defended themselves and survived. At present the Solons number 2500 and the Sibos 9200 out of the total number of "Manchus" in the province. With the exception of some 1700 in the Chuguchak region, virtually all of those classed as Manchus are in the Ili Valley. Here they continue to predominate in a few villages on either side of the river in territory that is predominately Kazakh or Uighur.

*563 241 231 191 For the most part, the Manchus live by agriculture — though this is supplemented also by sheep raising and hunting. To a considerable extent they have succeeded in maintaining their traditional way of life, even to the point of preserving their military ability. Nevertheless they are also in the forefront of current developments in the province. Many speak other languages beside their own, including Russian. At one time there was even talk among them of replacing their Manchu writing with a script based on the Latin alphabet. The Sibos in particular have been highly praised for distinguishing themselves in carrying out tasks assigned them by the Kulja regime, such as delivering grain and clover.

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

243 the young rice shoots as Chinese farmers do. On the average, the
242 amount of labor expended on a unit of land is about the same in Sinkiang as in China proper, but the yield is somewhat less.

Cotton is the most important commercial crop in Sinkiang. It is
248 known to have been grown in Turfan as early as the T'ang Dynasty (618–907). By 1750, it was used to pay taxes in Yarkand.[15] In 1776 it was described as ranking next to the wheat crop in importance,[16] and it has been one of the leading exports to Russia since 1890. The cotton belt lies south of the Tien Shan. Turfan and Merket (on the northern edge of the Yarkand oasis) lead in production, followed by Yarkand, Khotan, Kashgar, and Aksu.

Two varieties are grown, native and American. After failure in experimenting with Sea Island cotton in Tashkent in the 1870's, two Russian merchants named Belyakov and Lakhtin experimented very successfully with the Upland variety in 1883. After 1885 American species began to supplant the native type in Ferghana and Samarkand. A few years later Russian dealers set out to improve the quality grown in Sinkiang by distributing American seed.[17] Up to 1942 large quantities of seed were imported yearly from the Soviet Union, especially two varieties of American origin called "Shredder" and "Novrozkii." From American long-staple varieties of 25 to 29 mm., 32-count yarns can be spun, while the short-staple Inner Asian variety can be used only for 24-count yarns. In 1943, 100,000 acres of cotton were planted, 73 per cent with native cotton and 23 per cent with seed of the American varieties.

231 Silk is a second ancient crop of commercial importance. The
439 most noted silk oases have always been Khotan and Yarkand.
288 Part of the raw silk they produce is manufactured on the spot into fabrics which have greatly declined in value and beauty in recent years, and the rest is exported to the Soviet Union and

[15] Kuropatkin, p. 126.

[16] Chuan Yuan, *Geography of the Western Regions*, written 1776, published 1818, chuan 1, p. 1 (in Chinese).

[17] "Economy in Sinkiang," *Chinese Weekly Economic Bulletin*, Chinese Government Bureau of Economic Information, pp. 16, 109, April 25, 1925.

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI 1 Sinkiang AI 1

India. The silkworms are fed on leaves from mulberry trees grown along the roadsides; there are also a few groves of wild mulberry. In recent years the Russians attempted to improve quality by importing eggs of the Baghdad, Oro, and Ascoli varieties. Silk production reached 350,000 kg. in 1942, but fell drastically to 100,000 kg. in 1943.

The basic producing unit in oasis agriculture is the family group living together under one roof. This group often includes married children, which makes it slightly larger than the average farm family in China. In Central China (Wukiang) an average farm family consists of four persons,[18] in North China (Paoting) of six persons,[19] in Northwest China (Kansu) of 6.87 persons.[20] A field survey in Khotan showed 7.95 persons, and in Kashgar a typical family consisted of an old couple, two sons, and three daughters-in-law. In the tiny oasis of Kumish a similar family consisted of parents, three sons, two daughters-in-law, and a daughter and her husband, or nine in all.

While farms in the Tarim Basin average from 4½ to 6 acres in size, larger than the 4.2 acres given for China proper,[21] the larger size of the families means, in Khotan for instance, only .58 acres per capita as against .68 acres in China proper.

There are many farms, of course, which are much smaller than the overall average. The field survey referred to above, covering sixty-five households in two villages in the Khotan oasis, showed that the smallest farm was 1.08 acres and the largest farm was 18 acres. A further breakdown of the figures shows that rich peasants in this group of sixty-five households had average holdings of 11.1 acres, middle peasants 5.7 acres, and poor peasants 2.8 acres.[22] The farms of the poor peasants are too small for the

[18] Fei Hsiao-tung, *Peasant Life in China*, New York, 1939, p. 29.

[19] Farm survey conducted by the Institute of Social Sciences, Academia Sinica.

[20] Farm survey conducted by the National Resources Commission of China.

[21] Geo. B. Cressey, *Asia, Lands and Peoples*, New York, 1944, p. 84.

[22] Uighur farmers, however, do not measure their land by its size but in terms of the amount of seed which can be sown on it. The Uighur measure for this purpose is the *charak*, which varies both from place to place and according to the seed measured. In Kashgar, the *charak* equals 24 pounds of

recognizable so far as quality and taste are concerned." Turfan grapes are exported in dried raisin form to other parts of China; I tried them repeatedly in Kansu Province, and can testify to their delightful taste. The Sinkiang rice, too, is notable for the size and meatiness of its kernel. Chinese from Hunan are said to have first brought rice cultivation to Sinkiang, toward the end of the nineteenth century when they began cultivating the crop along the banks of the Urumchi River. Aqsu, Manas, Wu-su, Sui-ting, and San-tao Pa at present are all rice-growing localities.

South Sinkiang is the principal cotton-growing region, and the crop of Turfan, with an annual yield recently estimated optimistically at [illegible],000,000 *chin* (catties), is the best. Flourishing cotton fields [illegible] also at So-ch'e, Maralbashi (Pa-ch'u), Shan-shan, Su-lo, and Korla. In the past Sinkiang cotton was practically all of local origin, but in recent years American cotton seed, imported from Soviet Russia, has begun to predominate. The estimate of one Moslem merchant (as reported in late 1942) put the annual provincial crop of Sinkiang-type cotton between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 catties.

Around a million catties of raw silk reportedly is produced each year from Khotan, Yarkand (So-ch'e), and Su-lo acreage, and a considerable increase is expected; for the provincial Reconstruction Commission has been importing improved silkworm eggs and extending sericulture plots.

Animal Husbandry

When Chinese Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Shen Hung-lieh, visited Sinkiang in 1942, he and Ch'en Chi-jung, a *Ta Kung Pao* newspaper correspondent, inspected a number of cattle ranches near the Urumchi River. Ch'en on that occasion was told that the technique developed on the Sinkiang ranches in the past five years of cattle breeding could be compared favorably with that of any nation in the world. This achievement, in combination with some of the world's best pasture land, has made animal husbandry vie with agriculture as one of the foremost occupations of the New Sinkiang. Samuel Chao estimates that it is engaged in by one-fourth of the Sinkiang people, and elsewhere it is pointed out that in this field Sinkiang leads all other

231 provinces of China. "The ox of I-li, the sheep of the Altai Mountains, and the horse of the Pa-li-k'un region, all have widespread fame," states the *Ts'ai-cheng P'ing-lun*. Mr. Chao judges the number of domesticated animals in Sinkiang to be as follows:

AN ESTIMATE OF AVAILABLE LIVESTOCK IN SINKIANG

Livestock	*Amount*
Sheep	12,000,000
Horses	2,000,000
Goats	1,300,000
Cattle	1,000,000
Camels	500,000

"Animal husbandry," writes Mr. Chao, "is concentrated in the northern part of the province where the steppes along the I-li River and the Altai Range provide feeding ground. The Altai prairie is Sinkiang's leading sheep raising district, Suiting [I-li] is famous for cattle, and, with Chenhsi [Chen-hsi or Barkol] and Yenchi [Yen-ch'i or Karashahr], also well known for its horses."

237 He estimates Sinkiang's annual output of animal products, skins, and furs to be:

AN ESTIMATE OF SINKIANG'S ANNUAL OUTPUT OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS INCLUDING SKINS AND FURS

Product	*Amount*
Wool	30,000,000 Catties
Camel's hair	2,500,000 "
Horse hair	1,200,000 "
Sheep skins	1,500,000 Pieces
Ermine skins (exports)	100,000 "
Ox hides	60,000 "
Fox skins (exports)	48,600 "
Horse hides	40,000 "
Wolf skins (exports)	11,000 "
Sable skins (exports)	5,000 "

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

[487] milking the sheep and goats by the water's edge while the men and children looked on.

[231] Next morning we awoke to find a brilliant sun shining on a cheerful scene composed of yaks, yak-calves, donkeys, ponies, sheep, goats, curly-headed children, rainbow-clothed white-turbaned women and one to two shaggy men (the rest were still in bed), against a background of fat mushroom-like *aq-ois*, foaming river and steep green hill-side. I had decided to halt a day at this pleasant spot, partly to give the caravan a rest, partly in order to reconnoitre on foot a pass called the Merki Davan by which I hoped to cross into the upper Qara-tash valley and thus gain access to one of the blank patches on the map which Sir Aurel Stein had advised me to explore. To cut a long story short,[1] Gerard Price and I, assisted by Juma Beg with his men and yaks, reached a height of 16,500 feet on a snowy spur, from which point we could see that the "pass" was quite out of the question for our caravan. It was nothing but a lofty ridge of rock at least 17,000 feet high, deep in snow even on the south side and defended also by steep ice-slopes.

[758] Meanwhile D. passed a strenuous but amusing day with the Kirghiz ladies, all of whom clamoured (mostly quite unnecessarily) for medical treatment and seemed to appreciate presents of quinine tabloids and castor oil even more than the beads and other small gifts which D. had brought for them. At any rate, she made herself very popular, for next morning when we marched down the valley their farewells were most affectionate and they walked at her stirrup quite a long way down the valley. One of the younger ones was perfectly lovely; the coloured sketch of her which was done by D. on this occasion and is reproduced as a frontispiece to this book does not flatter her unduly. As a rule, however, the faces of the Kirghiz women, though broad-browed and pleasing, are too flat for beauty.

[37] As we filed down the Yambulak valley it became ever narrower and its sides higher and steeper. The profusion of wild flowers was a revelation; anemones, primulas, king-cups, columbines, antirrhinums, campanulas, asphodel and many others of which we did not know the names grew in masses, especially in places where the sheep and goats could not get at them. Cascades of wild roses grew out of every

[1] For an account of this climb, see "Geographical Journal," November, 1925, p. 388.

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

town by canals, and the water-supply of Yarkand consists solely of the scores of semi-stagnant ponds dotted all over the city. These are filled up but once a year when the Yarkand river is in flood and they can be replenished with the overflow from the irrigated fields outside the walls; they do not look as if they were ever cleaned out from century to century, though I suppose they must be occasionally.

The countryside round Yarkand is delightful, though perfectly flat and not broken up by streams with high loess bluffs as in the Kashgar oasis. The farmsteads, mills, wayside shrines and village bazaars are built almost entirely of wood, but the houses and barns are not flimsy card-house affairs like their counterparts in the Kashmir Valley; they are solid, comfortable-looking and satisfactory, like old English farmsteads. Everything is old, long-established, peaceful and prosperous; the well-timbered countryside with its broad fields, brimming canals and farms teeming with cattle, horses, sheep, goats, donkeys, poultry and rosy-cheeked children suggests a kind of Asiatic Holland.

Yarkand is if possible even more "Central Asian" and remote than Kashgar, owing to its greater distance from the Russian frontier and therefore from Europe and "civilization," and an even more astonishing diversity of races is represented in the streets, including the following: Andijanis (Mussulman Russian subjects from Ferghana); Badakhshis (from Afghan Badakhshan); Baltis (from the southern valleys of the Karakoram); Bokharans; Chinese; Chitralis; Dulanis (aboriginals from the Yarkand River valley); Gilgitis (mostly freed slaves or their children); Kanjutis (men of Hunza and Nagar); Kashmiris; Kirghiz; Ladakhis (from Little Tibet); Pathans, Afghan and British; Punjabi Hindus; Punjabi Mussulmans; Shighnis (from Roshan and Shighnan, Upper Oxus); Sindhis (moneylenders from Shikarpur); Tajiks (from the Chinese Pamirs); Tungans (Chinese Muhammadans from N. Sinkiang and Kansu); Turkis; Wakhis (from Wakhan and the valleys of the Hindu Kush).

Of these the Turkis form the great bulk of the population; the Chinese are comparatively few, and are confined to the officials and their hangers-on, a few Tientsin merchants and some petty shopkeepers; the Tungans are mostly traders; Kirghiz and Tajiks come in from the mountains and Dulanis from the down-river marshes. All these are Chinese nationals; the rest are "travellers" or "men from over the mountains" (*dawan-āshti*) *i.e.*, foreigners, of whom the Andijani and Bokharan Russian subjects are represented *vis-à-vis* the Chinese by their own headman or *Aqsaqal*, while the Badakhshis, Baltis, Chitralis, Gilgitis, Kanjutis, Kashmiris, Ladakhis, Pathans, Punjabi Hindus and Muhammadans, and Sindhis look to the British Aqsaqal and his *naibs* or assistants for each community.

Posgam, 11th November, 1922.

We have at last escaped from Yarkand and are bound for the ancient Kingdom of Khotan. Our caravan now consists of the tarantass and four Chinese carts drawn by two horses each (except on marches where the road is heavy with sand, when one or more extra horses are engaged for each cart at a shilling a day each). The hire fixed for each two-horse cart was 20 Kashgar taels or about £3 for the journey to Khotan. The tarantass with our own horses in it we

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

toddling down to the ice-covered stream with blackened copper water-jugs to fill, a pretty sight. Later, when our camp was pitched, came three cheerful vast-turbaned, apple-cheeked ladies, with their sewing and their babies, and made themselves comfortable on the grass in front of D.'s tent, chatting with us and among themselves until D. should be ready to receive them inside. Then they crowded into her tent and hung excitedly over her unpacking. Though accustomed to friendliness and naturalness on the part of the Kirghiz, D. was at first a little puzzled at the remarkable lack of shyness of these women, on our very first appearance among them; but the mystery was soon solved. As she was setting out her toilet-table one of them suddenly pounced on a box of *trèfle incarnat* with cries of "Ufpah! Ufpah!" which means "powder-puff." D. was astonished, until they explained. One of them, it appeared, was the daughter of old Ibrahim Beg of Yambulak, and had recently been on a visit to her parents, who had told her all about our stay in their valley last July on our way to Kashgar. Consequently, the Suget ladies knew all that D. had then said and done, how she had given those of Yambulak cold cream for their hands and had initiated them in the mysteries of powder and puff, how she had promised them gloves and had painted a picture of the Beg's pretty daughter-in-law, and many other items of breathless interest. So D. knew what was expected of her, and ere long the camp resounded with their delighted gigglings as they powdered their noses and preened themselves in front of D.'s camp mirror.

Soon after leaving Suget Ayaghi we passed through a remarkable cleft in the high rocky wall and found ourselves in a wide sunny valley with snow-clad peaks at its head. Here, at a height of about 9,000 feet, were the summer pastures of the Suget Kirghiz and two of their cottages. There were no trees, but high up on the flanks of the central peaks we could see patches of fir-forest. This, we were told, was the valley to which the missionaries from Yarkand had come more than once for their summer camp. Leaving the Suget Jilgha by a pass just over 10,000 feet high we descended into a pleasant little valley called the Tam Jilgha, so called from the number of stone houses (*tām*) it contained. Poplars grew in it, remarkable at a height of over 9,000 feet, and there was quite a respectable area of cultivation, chiefly barley. Here we saw three different kinds of animal being used in the plough

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

[231] 487

within a few hundred yards; in one field a pair of horses and another of bullocks, on another plot a fine pair of yaks was harnessed to the plough. Crossing another quite easy pass we dropped down into the Sarai Jilgha, a much less fertile valley, with only two very poor families of Kirghiz in it.

On 8th April we crossed our third and highest pass in the Qizil Tagh, the Sarai Davan, 11,500 feet. It was steep and had a regular knife-edge top, but was not difficult and our carrier's ponies which were accustomed to the Karakoram road made light of it. Descending from the pass by a steep and narrow nullah we debouched on the Kinkol Valley at Kichik Qaraul, where we were on the Tashqurghan-Kashgar road up which we had come the previous July. We had thus left the "Red Mountains" behind us.

An attractive feature of the Qizil Tagh is the partridge shooting. We were there at the wrong time of year for it, but we shot a few birds for the pot now and then, and from the number of coveys we saw it was evident that in autumn a party of two or three guns would get a very good bag indeed in any one of the three valleys we visited. The only country in which I have seen as many red-legged partridge (*chikor*) as in the Qizil Tagh is the valleys of the Sulaiman Mountains in the north of British Baluchistan. The pursuit of the chikor or *keklik* (so called in Turki from the noise they make, kik-alik-alik-alik) is one of the most strenuous forms of sport I know. The birds are usually found near a steep, often precipitous, hillside; at the slightest alarm they run for it and climb, and you have to pound up after them as hard as you can. Without beaters, the difficulty usually is to put them up. Shooting for the pot, as I always did on these tours, I usually took a long shot at a runner, in which case the covey would often get up and in their agitation break back over my head, in which case I got a shot with my left barrel. This performance I could hardly describe as a "right and left," so I called it a "ground and air."

[136]

Marching up the Kinkol valley we struck westwards up the Chumbuz Jilgha, a promising glen, of which I had made a note for future exploration the previous July. It led up into another small blank patch in Sir. A. Stein's map, and my object was to survey it roughly and cross by a pass called the Kizmak which I knew led over from its head into the upper Qaratash Valley. Lest the Kizmak should prove really bad—it had never been crossed by European—I decided to send most

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

A KIRGHIZ BEG OF THE TIEN SHAN, WITH HIS HUNTING EAGLE

[Face p. 232]

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

of the Kunlun into the "Begship of the Three Hundred Hill Families," which is under the jurisdiction of the Amban of Chira. The people of Polu complain of this arrangement, for Chira is twice as far from them as Keriya. They told me however, that whereas they have always been assessed at ten families only, they number about eighty, so that their cultivation is taxed very lightly.[1] They are industrious cultivators, raising crops of barley, millet and lucerne on every available yard; but the dryness of this part of Asia is such that even here, right under snowy mountains 21,000 feet high, crops have to be carefully irrigated. There are two methods of irrigation in use; where the slope is slight, the fields are terraced in the usual manner; where it is steeper, the entire surface is covered with a key-pattern of channels about six inches deep, down which the water trickles over the whole field, a most laborious business. The chief industry, however, is stock-raising; though they look barren enough, the uplands in this neighbourhood grow excellent grass, owing probably to the fertility of the aerially-deposited loess which is found at the very highest elevations and gives a slightly dirty tinge even to the eternal snow. An excellent type of hill-pony, shaggy but better-looking and with finer hair than the Kalmuck ponies, is found here together with a black and very woolly breed of donkey; I bought one of the former for 32 taels (£4 5s.) and it turned out one of the best hill-ponies I have ever ridden. "Polu pony" as we always called him, besides being strong and willing, was a remarkably intelligent little animal and took in everything that was going on. On the long bare plateaux of Poma Qir and Chata Qir west of Polu we saw herds of yaks and camels as well as the ubiquitous sheep and goats.

An industry which would be of greater importance locally than it is, if the Chinese did not strictly control it and limit the output, is gold-washing. There is no doubt that gold exists in large quantities throughout the length, not only of the Altun Tagh but of the whole Kunlun system. I heard of gold-washing high up among the almost inaccessible gorges of the Upper Yarkand River; Stein mentions it at Pisha in the Qaranghu Tagh (Central Kunlun),[2] and speaks feelingly of

[1] This agrees roughly with what Stein heard at Chakar ("Serindia," pp. 1320–21); that the number of families in the Begship was assessed at 221, but amounted in 1907 to 1,802.

[2] "Ruins of Desert Cathay," Vol. II, p. 210.

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

do those of Qungur. The foot of the Oitagh Glacier is only 8,800 feet above the sea, as against an average of 12,000 feet in the case of the smaller and much less steeply-pitched glaciers of the Qaratash basin. The volume of the Oitagh Glacier is really enormous, but its ice-fall is so steep that the whole glacier is barely 4 miles long. It has several remarkable features. One is its tributary, the Bül Ush, which butts into it from the north-west near its foot, pushing it right across the valley and jamming it against the steep south-western side. A depression about 150 feet deep is thus formed above the bulge, and into this falls the moraine-stream, which travels under the ice for a mile and reappears from a remarkable cave in the black ice of the glacier-foot. Before joining the main glacier, the Bul Ush runs parallel with but about 2,000 feet immediately above it. A series of magnificent water-falls descends from the upper glacier to the lower at this point; one of them is at least 500 feet high and falls clear like the Swiss Staubbach, while another spouts out from a cleft in the cliff like tea from a pot. Yet another feature of the Oitagh glacier is its three parallel lateral moraines, one of which has a double edge with a trough 2–4 feet deep between.

The vegetation of the "alcove" at the head of the Oitagh valley, though of the same Tien Shan type, is altogether richer than that of the Alps of Qungur, doubtless owing to the lower elevation and to the shelter afforded by the tremendous precipices which enclose it on every side but the north-east. We had no rain, but from the appearance of the vegetation, the accounts of the inhabitants and the close proximity of the ice-clad mass of Chakragil I should say that the precipitation is at least as heavy as that of Kaying Bashi. Rowan-trees are more common and have great bunches of berries the size of small cherries: wild currants abound, and the conifers grow more densely if not taller. One fallen giant I measured was 112 feet long.

At the summer grazings the Turki "Taghlik" inhabitants, of Pilal occupy *aq-ois* like the Kirghiz, just as do the Tajiks of Sarikol who are racially totally different from either. They graze all kinds of stock, including yaks, which they breed for the Kashgar meat market, not for riding or milk. The Kashgar military authorities put from 25 to 50 horses out to grass up the valley every summer. The inhabitants of the *jilgha* are assessed for revenue at 500 *charaks* of barley, which can

C. The Kirghiz

563 1. The people

Taking Tien-shan as a whole, the Kirghiz form the leading [771] element of the population. They are Mohammedans of the Suni order, but they are not strict followers of their religion. Their [642] system of government is patriarchal, control of the different [622] sections being vested in tribal elders who enjoy almost unlimited authority. The elders (Manap) are chosen by the people, and regarded with honor and respect.

[233] The people are nomads whose main occupation is cattle rais- [241] ing. Only a small proportion of the population engages in farming.

563 2. Patterns of living
342 a. Dwelling

The Kirghiz do not live in houses. The poor live in shelters [184] made of branches under trees or against overhanging rocks. The rich live in tents, smaller and less ornate than the Mongolian yurt but more solid with thick layers of felt. A light tent is called an aq-ai. It stands a gale very well, as the shape is such that a high wind presses the structure even more firmly to the ground. To make it more stable, a large stone is placed in the tent and the woodwork of the roof is anchored to it by a rope.

The shape and structure of an aq-ai are similar to those of [354] the Mongolian yurt, but the interior arrangement differs. A fire always burns cheerily in the middle and a cauldron of mash [353] simmers upon it. At the far end is the kitchen, which is screened by gaily colored mats of reeds tightly wound with dyed wool. [251] Here the housewife stores her milk, cream and curds in vast wooden bowls. When the weather is wet, a row of young lambs [231] occupies one corner of the tent. They are tethered closely to a rope pegged down along the walls. Saddlebags, sieves, hats, [353] wool, coats, skins and so forth are hung along the tent walls. Piles of rolled-up felts and rugs occupy about a quarter of the circumference of the tent. The wealth of the owner may be guessed from the size of the piles.

563 The interior decoration in the tent of a wealthy Kirghiz is
342 often artistic. The walls are hung with embroideries made by
352 the women, and the ground is covered with carpets. There are
353 also pillows covered with multi-colored chintz of Chinese or Russian manufacture. Furniture is not generally used. There is [415] an occasional table, a few copper pots and pans, and some brass jugs used for boiling water and making tea.

563 b. Food
262
252 Staple foods for the Kirghiz are barley, bread, milk and its products, such as sour cream and qurut, a kind of cheese. In most tents there are cauldrons of brewing mash, a mixture of flour and milk. Qurut is made by drying sour cream in goatskin.

175
242 The Soviet Union sent
668 thirty-three airplanes and large numbers of locust experts to
433 spray insecticides over an area of some 2,669,000 mow (or
[177] 405,688 acres) during 1952-1955. On the state farms, the Army
[475] has done the lion's share of the work of reclaiming land, building
[701] irrigation works, erecting experimental farms and stations and operating them. (Union Research Service, Oct. 14, 1955. p. 7, No. 9.)

654 The Communists reported that they have given financial and
668 technical assistance to the various nationalities who till the soil
241 or engage in pastoral activities. By the end of 1954, agricultural
175 loans totalling some 26,140,000 yuan (U.S. $1,061) and some 46,000 farming implements had been supplied to the peasants, enabling every peasant household to have one trowel of its own and every 1.3 households to own a plow. These small figures indicate that assistance has been meagre; but even this might enable the peasants to increase output as compared to output obtained by previous farming implements.

241 Whether agriculture will prosper in Sinkiang depends entirely
312 on the steps taken in water conservancy and the proper utilization
668 of water. Already five million additional mow of land (160,000
175 acres) have been irrigated in the past six years and the irrigated acreage in 1954 has been increased by 30.2 per cent since 1949. Reservoirs have been constructed like the well-known "Red Wild Goose Reservoir" and the "Peace Reservoir" which both now irrigate more than 237,000 mow (36,024 acres of land). Three
[475] state farms, collective farms, and a dozen or so agricultural co-
[474] ops have been formed in the area.

231 By the end of 1954, the total number of livestock in the whole
433 province numbered 17,105,000 head, an increase of 7.47 per cent
175 over 1953. (In 1947 the total number of livestock was 15,037,000.
668 The figure reported for 1954 indicates a 13 per cent increase.) The plan for 1955 is to raise the number fo 18,987,567 head, a net increase of 11 per cent. This will include 537,280 head of large and small animals of improved breed (including 515,792 sheep, 7,930 large domestic animals, 13,538 pigs); 2,839,140 head of livestock will be innoculated against or cured of various diseases. The Chinese Communists complain, however, of many defects in animal husbandry. During the past winters, insufficient feed was gathered and many animals died. It was estimated that some 200,000 died in the spring of 1954, an approximate loss of one per cent per annum.

313 The forestry policy has been to protect existent forests from
668 fire and damage, to survey forest areas suitable for afforestation, to plant saplings there, and to afforestate areas near rural villages for the development of co-ops and state farms. Each year, the quota mou to be afforestated is set and state departments undertake to meet these quotas. Nurseries have been built and seedlings planted in these tracts.

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
Sinkiang AI 1

Ansi, and our own exhilaration was shared by the whole cavalcade. The tired mules shook their heads as they smelt the cool verdure, while the carter explained: 'Now our troubles are all over! We have come to sweet water!' Several of the inns were full, but we finally got rooms in a seemingly abandoned courtyard. The landlord was away from home, but a good deal of knocking brought his wife from her bed, and she consented to receive us. In a few minutes the sheep-dung fire was glowing, the water boiling, and we were drinking an ambrosial infusion-tea made with 'sweet water.'

A good number of families inhabited this oasis[1], and we were now sufficiently far from the Kansu frontier for the normal conditions of travel and business to obtain once more. The various inn yards were full of peasants' carts bringing produce from Hami, and we were also able to buy fresh vegetables and a melon. We sat for several hours in the shade of the trees by the bubbling spring, talking with the women who came there to draw water. It was a restful spot, and it was with regret that we left it. The next dawn brought us to Hwanglukang—'The Hill of Yellow Reeds.' Here the character of the country changed, the village being situated in the midst of rolling steppes, where tall grass supplied abundant provender for cattle. In this place we saw the cattle all kneeling before tussocks of coarse grass which they had worn down to smooth hummocks with the rubbing of their necks. The appearance was very strange and gave the impression of an act of worship. In the afternoon we wandered out to see the village and its inhabitants, calling at the Mosque, where we found a venerable Ahung—courteous, dignified and friendly—surrounded by a group of little boys, to whom he was teaching the Koran. They were

1 [Changliushui -- Analyst

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
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member of the party knew how to mend a sewing machine. It seemed they had bought one from some destitute Russians, and now something had gone wrong, and they could make no further use of it.

One of the party (who is known to her fellow-travellers as a walking encyclopedia and an emporium of general knowledge), undertook to do what was necessary, and she was soon seated on a pile of rugs in the tent surrounded by a group of wondering nomads, as she skilfully made the needful repairs. Asking for some cotton she was given a small roll of cardboard, on which had been wound some coarsely-twisted skein thread. They had no other, but when we produced a reel of good English cotton and threaded it to the machine, the delight of the whole family knew no bounds. While this operation was in progress Mr. Hunter came into the tent, and the fierce dog, always on guard, fastened its teeth into his trouser leg. We learnt then that the only safe way to enter a nomad's tent is backwards, keeping a sharp lookout for the watchdog, who can never be caught napping!

We spent the next night at Toli, and on leaving reached our maximum day's stage of one hundred miles. We got off at 5 a.m. and made good progress for the first hundred *li* to Laofengkow. On the way we met a band of Chinese, travelling back to Urumchi from Siberia, with a large supply of opium, which they had sown and reaped within Russian territory. After a brief rest we were on the road again for the second hundred *li* of our day's journey. We did so well that in a weak moment we gave way to Macnab's obstinate determination to keep in, over a lonely Gobi road, with another party of travellers, consisting of a Nogai gentleman and two charming little boys, on their way to Moscow. It was late after-